

Bible Point ▶

Jesus died for us because he loves us.

Bible Verse

“Jesus died and was raised to life again” (1 Thessalonians 4:14a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- talk about sad times they’ve experienced,
 - hear how Jesus prayed when he was sad before he died,
 - help Whiskers understand why Jesus was arrested, and
 - sing a song to help them remember Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- **Jesus prays in the garden.**

Mark 14:32-50;
Luke 22:39-54a



“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me.” Nowhere in the gospels is Jesus’ full humanity more apparent than in this fervent prayer to be spared from his imminent death. Luke tells us that Jesus was so filled with pain and grief that his sweat was like drops of blood. But Jesus rose above his human emotions to do the will of the Father. The Roman soldiers who approached with swords and clubs expected to encounter resistance, but to their surprise Jesus went with them willingly. He knew the time had come for him to complete his work—to die on the cross for the sins of the world.

Three- and four-year-olds may not yet understand Jesus’ death. They wonder why Jesus was arrested when he didn’t do anything wrong. Children who have been raised in the church often think of Jesus as a personal friend, and the thought of Jesus dying can be sad and scary. Use this lesson to teach children that Jesus’ death and resurrection were part of God’s plan and that Jesus willingly gave his life because he loves us.

Prayer

- Read Matthew 22:36-38.
- What do the words “all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind” mean in your life?
- Pray: Lord, help me keep my love for you genuine. Help me model your love to the children as I...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, markers, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Easter Oil —Draw pictures of Easter events using olive oil “paint.”	Olive oil, pie pan, newsprint, scissors, plastic tablecloth, paper towels	
	Option 2: Garden Wall —Create a wall garden in the story area.	Green paper, scissors, muffin papers, self-adhesive gift bows, masking tape	
	Option 3: Prayer Tree —Make leaves for a prayer tree.	Construction paper, markers, scissors, tape	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Talk about sad situations they’ve been in.	Blue construction paper, scissors	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hear from Luke 22 that Jesus was arrested as he prayed in the garden.	Bible	
	Do the Bible Story —Learn an action rhyme about the events leading up to Jesus’ death.		
Closing 	Part of God’s Plan —Help Whiskers understand that Jesus’ arrest was part of God’s plan.		
	Remember Jesus —Sing a song to help them remember Jesus’ death and resurrection.	CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, markers, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s lesson. Use questions such as “What did you tell your family about Jesus’ special meal with his friends?” or “What did you do to remember Jesus?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that** ► Jesus died for us because he loves us.
- Hand out the Easter lily name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate between the activities to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “What’s your favorite part of Easter?” or “When do you pray?”

■ Option 1: Easter Oil

SUPPLIES: olive oil, pie pan, newsprint, scissors, plastic tablecloth, paper towels

Pour a thin layer of olive oil in the bottom of one or two pie pans. Cut sheets of newsprint into quarters, and give each child a quarter. Have children help you cover your work area with a plastic tablecloth.

Show children how to dip their fingers in the olive oil and then draw pictures on the newsprint. Have children draw pictures of their favorite Easter events. Let them choose events from the Bible stories they’ve heard or from family Easter celebrations. Remind children that Easter is a time to celebrate that ► Jesus died for us because he loves us.

Tell children that the oil they’re painting with comes from olives. Explain that today’s Bible story is about a time Jesus prayed in a garden where there were olive trees.

When children finish their pictures, blot the oil with paper towels, and set the pictures aside to dry. Have children wash their hands before moving on to the next activity.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**

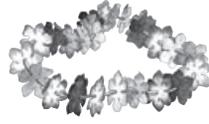

teacher tips

Children will have an easier time sticking things to the wall if you use double-stick tape. Another option is to cover a wall or bulletin board with paper and have children use glue sticks.



Option 2: Garden Wall

SUPPLIES: green paper, scissors, muffin papers, self-adhesive gift bows, masking tape



Before class, cut green crepe paper or construction paper into strips. You'll use the green strips for grass and plants in your wall garden.

Tell children that today's Bible story is about a time Jesus prayed in a garden. Invite them to help you get ready for that story by turning your story area into a garden. Show them how to use muffin papers and self-adhesive bows to make flowers. They can use the green paper strips for stems and grass. Help them tape the muffin papers and green paper to the wall. Have children help you tape the *flower lei* to the wall for added color.

When you've finished, stand back and admire your garden. Invite children to say a prayer there if they'd like. Explain that Jesus prayed in a garden just before he died, and that **▶ he died for us because he loves us.**

Option 3: Prayer Tree

SUPPLIES: construction paper, markers, scissors, tape

Before class, cut out a tree trunk from a large sheet of construction paper. Post the tree trunk on a wall or bulletin board where children can reach it.

Give children sheets of colored construction paper, and help them trace around their hands. Write children's names on their hands, and then help children cut them out. Attach the hand cutouts to the tree as leaves.

Explain that today's Bible story is about a time when Jesus prayed in a garden where there were trees. Say a prayer of thanks for each child as you point out his or her hand cutouts on the tree.

When everyone has arrived, and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the CD to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ *Setting the Stage*

SUPPLIES: blue construction paper, scissors

Before class, cut six large teardrop shapes from blue construction paper. Post one teardrop in one corner of the room, two teardrops in another corner, and three teardrops in a third corner.

Gather children in the center of the room. Remind them that you'll turn the lights off and on again to get their attention. Explain that when you flash the lights, they are to stop what they're doing and be quiet. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Made a garden; painted with oil; made a hand tree.)

Say: **Some of you made a wall garden for our story area, some of you made a praying-hands tree, and some of you painted pictures with olive oil. You were all learning important things about our Bible story. Today we're going to hear how Jesus prayed in a garden. Jesus knew he would have to die soon, and he was feeling sad.**

Ask: • **When have you felt sad?** (When my best friend moved away; when I lost my bike; when I had to stay home from a birthday party because I was sick.)

Say: **Those are all sad times. I'm going to read some more sad times. Each time I read something, you have to decide if that thing would make you feel really sad, just a little bit sad, or not sad at all.**

Point to the teardrop shapes you've placed in the corners. Say: **If something would make you feel really sad, go stand in the corner with the three teardrops. If something would make you feel just a little bit sad, go stand in the corner with two teardrops. If something wouldn't make you feel sad at all, go stand in the corner with only one teardrop.**

Make sure children understand the instructions, and then read the following situations. Pause after you read each one to allow time for children to go to the appropriate corner. Read:

- **You dropped the ice cream off your ice-cream cone.**
- **Your family's TV is broken.**
- **You have to eat jelly beans for dinner.**
- **Your pet died.**
- **Your best friend is moving away.**
- **You lost your favorite stuffed animal.**

After you've read all the situations, give the signal, and have children return to the story area. Say: **Some of those things were pretty sad. After Jesus ate his special last meal with his friends, he was very sad. He was sad about leaving his friends. He was also sad about all the wrong things people had done. But he knew that if he died on the cross, he could make things better. ► Jesus died for us because he loves us, and so that we can be forgiven for all the wrong things we do. Let's bring out our Bible and find out what happened just before Jesus died.**



In the "Setting the Stage" activity, children in your class may disagree on whether a situation is very sad, a little sad, or not sad at all. You may want to pair children with unlike opinions, and have them share their stories.



■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



**I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *hosanna stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *hosanna stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible], **and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the CD to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together,
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible



Gather children in your story area, near the wall garden children made during Let's Get Started. Open the Bible to **Luke 22:34-54a**, and show it to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Luke in the Bible, God's special Book. Our Learning Mat shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

Fold the *Learning Mat: Jesus' Death and Resurrection* so only the garden scene is showing. There are no people pictured in this scene. To tell the story, you'll use the *Bible figures* of Jesus kneeling, two disciples, soldiers, and Jesus standing. Set the figures where you can reach them easily.

Point out the wall garden. Say: **We're in our garden that some of you made earlier. What kind of plants do you see growing in our garden?** (Flowers; grass.)

Show children the picture of the garden on the *Learning Mat*. Say: **This garden has a special name. It's called the garden of Gethsemane. Can you say that name?** Pause. **The garden of Gethsemane looks a little bit different from our wall garden. What kind of plants do you see growing in this garden?** (Grass; flowers; trees.)

Hold up the *Bible figure* of Jesus kneeling, and invite one of the children to place it on the *Learning Mat*. Say: **Jesus liked to come to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. Where do you like to pray?** (At the dinner table; in my bed at night; anywhere.)

Say: **Jesus knew that soldiers were coming to take him away. He was feeling sad, and he wanted to tell God how he was feeling. So Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. He took his friends with him, and he asked them to pray, too.**

Hold up the *Bible figure* of the two disciples, and invite one of the children to place it on the *Learning Mat*. Say: **Let's pretend we're in the garden praying with Jesus. We can kneel around our Learning Mat just as Jesus is kneeling in this picture.**

Make sure children all find a place to kneel near the *Learning Mat*. Then ask:

- **What would you pray for if you were in the garden with Jesus?** (That Jesus wouldn't have to die; that God would help Jesus feel better.)

Say: **Jesus' friends knew Jesus was feeling sad. They felt sad, too. But as they prayed, they got sleepy. In fact, they got so sleepy that they fell sound asleep.**

Invite a child to lay the *Bible figure* of the two disciples down on the mat. Remove the figure of Jesus kneeling, and invite a child to replace it with the figure of Jesus standing, looking sad.

Say: **Jesus was sad that his friends were sleeping. He woke them up and told them to pray some more. But soon a crowd of people came into the garden.**

Crowds followed Jesus wherever he went. Most people loved Jesus. He was good and kind. He made sick people well and taught people everywhere about God's love. But a few people didn't like Jesus. The leaders of the Temple didn't like it that everyone followed Jesus and listened to him. They wanted people to listen to them instead. So they made a plan to trap Jesus while he was praying.

Hand the *Bible figure* of the soldiers to a child, and invite the child to put it on the mat as you say: **The leaders of the Temple came into the garden. They brought**

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soldiers with them. The soldiers were carrying swords and clubs. They were ready to arrest Jesus! The soldiers grabbed Jesus to arrest him and take him away.

Walk the figure of the soldiers over to the Jesus figure. Then continue: **The soldiers had their swords ready. They were afraid Jesus might try to escape. But Jesus didn't run away. He knew this was part of God's plan.**

Move the figures of the soldiers, the disciples, and Jesus off the mat as you continue: **Jesus followed the soldiers quietly. The leaders of the Temple thought they had finally gotten rid of Jesus. Do you think they really got rid of him?**

BIBLE VERSE ►



BIBLE POINT ►



Let children respond, and then continue: **The leaders of the Temple didn't know that Jesus would come back to life. But we know what happened because our Bible verse tells us: ► "Jesus died and was raised to life again."**

► ***Jesus died for us because he loves us,* and so we could all be forgiven for the wrong things we do. Jesus forgave the leaders of the Temple, and Jesus can forgive us, too. Let's thank God for that.**

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for Jesus. We're glad to have Jesus for our friend, and we're glad that he died and came back to life again for us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: none

Say: **Let's do an action rhyme to help us remember that ► *Jesus died for us because he loves us.* I'll say the words and do the actions first, and then we'll say the words and do the actions together.**

Lead children in the following action rhyme. Read each line, and demonstrate the accompanying motion. Then have children say the words and do the motion with you. Read:

Jesus and friends walked up a hill (*walk fingers up arm*)

To pray in a garden, quiet and still. (*Put finger to lips to indicate quiet.*)

He told his friends to kneel and pray (*kneel*)

For strength to make it through that day. (*Fold hands.*)

When Jesus kneeled and bowed his head (*bow head*),

His friends all fell asleep instead. (*Put hands on side of head as if sleeping on a pillow.*)

When they woke up, they heard the sound (*stand up, and put hand to ear as if listening*)

Of soldiers marching all around. (*March in place.*)

They arrested Jesus and took him away. (*Motion for someone to follow you.*)

All Jesus' friends were sad that day. (*Rub eyes as if crying.*)

But Jesus didn't run or fight. (*Shake head.*)

He knew he was doing what was right. (*Nod head.*)

The time had come for Jesus to die (*tap imaginary wristwatch*)

And go back to live with God on high. (*Point up to heaven.*)

Jesus came back to life on day number three. (*Hold up three fingers.*)

Now he lives and cares for you and me. (*Hug self.*)

teacher tips

Make sure you take time to answer children's questions about Jesus' death. If children seem sad or scared, remind them that Jesus was brave and trusted God's plan.

Closing

■ Part of God's Plan

SUPPLIES: none



Gather the children together, and bring out Whiskers. Set the *Learning Mat* and *Bible figures* nearby. Go through the following script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Teacher: Hello, Whiskers. Did you bring your egg with a cross on it?

Whiskers: No, I didn't bring it with me.

Teacher: Did you forget?

Whiskers: No, I gave my egg with the cross on it to my cousin Joey to help him remember Jesus.

Teacher: That was very thoughtful of you, Whiskers.

Whiskers: Cousin Joey doesn't know very much about Jesus. I thought he might need something to remind him that we celebrate Easter because Jesus died for us and he wants us to remember him.

Teacher: You remembered that from last week, Whiskers. That's great! Would you like to hear the Bible story we're learning about today?

Whiskers: Yes, I want to find out more about Jesus. *(Lead children in telling Whiskers the story of Jesus' arrest, using the Learning Mat and Bible figures. When you get to the part about soldiers arresting Jesus, have Whiskers interrupt.)* They arrested Jesus? Did they put him in handcuffs and everything?

Teacher: No, Whiskers. Back in Bible times they didn't have handcuffs. They probably used ropes to tie people's hands together.

Whiskers: Boy, oh boy. If I'd been there, I would have chewed right through that rope so Jesus could get away.

Teacher: We don't know whether they tied Jesus up, Whiskers. The Bible doesn't tell us. But Jesus didn't want to get away.

Whiskers: Why not? I don't understand. Jesus didn't do anything wrong. He didn't deserve to be arrested.

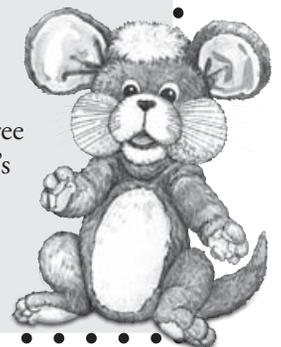
Teacher: You're right, Whiskers. Jesus didn't do anything wrong. But it was part of God's plan for Jesus to die on the cross so we could be forgiven for all the wrong things we do.

Whiskers: *(Crying)* I don't like that story. It's sad.

Teacher: *(Lifting Whiskers' chin)* It is sad that Jesus had to die. But that's not the end of the story. Our Bible verse tells us ► "Jesus died and was raised to life again." We celebrate at Easter because Jesus didn't stay dead. He came back to life after three days. And that makes us very happy. ► Jesus died for us because he loves us. Let's shout "Hooray for Jesus!" three times.

(Lead children and Whiskers in shouting, "Hooray for Jesus!")

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Remember Jesus



BIBLE POINT ▶

SUPPLIES: CD player



Say: ▶ ***Jesus died for us because he loves us.*** Let's close our class by singing "I'll Remember" to help us remember that Jesus died for us and then came back to life and went to live with God in heaven.

Lead children in singing "I'll Remember" (track 11) with the CD to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me."



SING

Jesus said, "Remember me."
Then he died for you and me.
I know Jesus is God's Son.
I'll remember what he's done.

Yes, I'll remember;
Yes, I'll remember.
Yes, I'll remember
That Jesus died for me.

Jesus is alive today.
He rose again on the third day.
He watches me from heav'n above.
I'll remember his great love.

Yes, I'll remember;
Yes, I'll remember.
Yes, I'll remember
That Jesus is alive.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



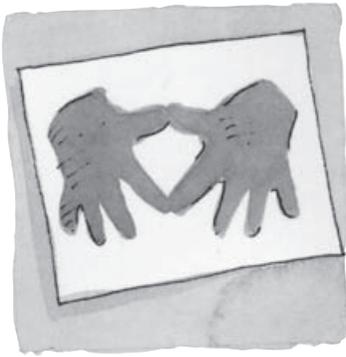
For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Soldier March**

Play a game of Tag. Have the child who is “It” be a Soldier. Have children march around the room, instead of run. If the Soldier tags them, they’re arrested, and they have to sit down in a designated area. “Arrested” children can be freed if someone else touches them and says, ► *“Jesus died for us because he loves us.”*

■ **Make to Take: Olive Oil Prayers**



Cover a work area with a plastic tablecloth, and set a shallow pan of olive oil in the center. Have wet washcloths on hand for quick cleanup.

Give each child a sheet of light-colored construction paper. Show them the olive oil, and remind them that it comes from olives. Tell them that olives grew in the garden where Jesus prayed.

Have each child dip one hand into the olive oil and then put two hands together as if they’re praying. Have them rub their hands together to spread the oil around. Help children gently press their hands onto their construction paper with thumbs and forefingers touching, as shown in the margin. Then have them wipe off their hands with washcloths or paper towels.

Blot children’s papers with paper towels to remove any excess oil. Have children hold their papers up to the light to see the light come through their handprints. Point out the heart shape between the handprints. Tell them they can hang their handprints up near a window at home to remind them that Jesus loved them enough to die for them.

■ **Treat to Eat: Olive Trees**

Set out bowls of pretzels with black and green jelly beans. Have children work together to make a large olive tree. They can lay pretzels end to end for the tree’s trunk and branches and then use the green jelly beans for leaves and the black jelly beans for olives. You may want to bring in real olives for children to taste.

When children finish, let them eat their creation. Remind children that olive trees grew in the garden where Jesus prayed. As they’re eating, review the details of today’s Bible story.



■ **Story Picture: Jesus Is Arrested**

Give each child a strip of aluminum foil and a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson). Show each child how to crush the aluminum-foil strip and tape it to the picture of the soldier’s sword. Then have children color their pictures. As children are working, review the details of today’s Bible story. Remind children that ► *“Jesus died for us because he loves us,”* and then he came back to life as part of God’s plan.

Today I learned...

Jesus died for us because he loves us.

Help me learn this:

"Jesus died and was raised to life again"
(1 Thessalonians 4:14a).

Ask me:

- Why did Jesus go to the garden to pray?
- Where do you like to pray?
- What can our family pray about this week?

Family Fun

- Gather your whole family and go for an Easter prayer walk together. Walk through a nearby park or garden until you find a quiet spot to sit and pray. Thank God for sending Jesus to die for us and come back to life so that we can be forgiven and live in heaven with him.

Lesson 4
Today your child learned that **JESUS DIED FOR US BECAUSE HE LOVES US.** The children heard how Jesus prayed in the garden before he was arrested. They helped their puppet friend understand that Jesus' death was part of God's plan.

Jesus Is Arrested (Luke 22:39-54a)

